

In 1802, President Thomas Jefferson said, "I predict future happiness for Americans if they can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people under the pretense of taking care of them."

I cannot think of a truer or more appropriate statement at a time like this.

Sunday, March 21, 2010, is a day that won't easily be forgotten in American history. It is the day that the will of the American people and the founding tenets of the United States of America were subverted. It is a day when congressional Democrats and the president of the United States sent a message to future generations that they are willing to sacrifice the well-being of 270 million Americans in order to provide a new entitlement to 30 million Americans.

There were 219 House members, all Democrats, who voted in favor of this bill. This, in and of itself, is not surprising. That bloc contained the most liberal elements of the Democratic Party in the House of Representatives, who all know that approving this bill would lead the United States down a path toward full-blown, European-style government health care.

The more telling number however, is that 212 members voted against this legislation. That number includes 34 Democrats, a significant portion of the House Democratic Caucus. History will remember that this bill passed under a bipartisan consensus – a consensus of opposition.

The proponents of this bill – which first was passed by the Senate in December and will be signed by President Barack Obama as soon as Tuesday – have lauded how wonderful it is. But a simple question must be answered: if this bill is so wonderful, why do House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and President Obama insist on making sure that some their political allies won't be bothered by its most inconvenient parts?

Take, for instance, the exemptions for AARP, union health plans and individual insurance companies. The bill exempts AARP, the national organization of retirement-age people and a major provider of life, health, home and auto insurance, from a provision that prohibits terminating health coverage for people for pre-existing conditions. Why? Because AARP is a very liberal organization that almost always supports Democratic Party initiatives. It also is not

by coincidence that AARP, along with union worker health plans and Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan, are exempted from the tax on so-called Cadillac health plans, which applies new taxes based on how much a health plan costs, not on what it covers.

Proponents also extol a cut in the current Medicare Advantage program, one of the few elements of Medicare that actually works reasonably well. Yet, the bill excludes seniors in Florida, which has one of the highest percentages of senior citizens in the country. This inducement was dubbed Gator Aid when it was included in the Senate bill last December.

What's most frightening, however, is that this bill transfers the costs of health care onto the states. In fact, it would add about \$ 4 billion a year to California's already crushing deficit, according to estimates by the state of California. Not surprisingly, some 37 states are planning to sue or discussing suing the federal government over the bill's mandates.

Make no mistake, bipartisanship was on display in the Capitol this past historic weekend, but it was bipartisan opposition. With this bill, the government will be doing exactly what Thomas Jefferson more than 200 years ago counseled us against doing.

On Sunday, a little bit of the liberty, freedom, and justice was taken away from the American people. But for those who believe in the significance of these canons of America's founding, the fight goes on.